

Hayward Public Library

Internet Use Policy and Rules

POLICY:

In order to provide timely access to information for every level of interest and ability in our diverse community from a variety of perspectives and in a variety of formats, the Hayward Public Library is committed to providing its customers with the latest advances in information technology.

The Internet and the World Wide Web, a vast global electronic network, is the newest and one of the most significant of these electronic information resources offering unlimited information of every kind: informational, educational, and recreational. In keeping with the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, Article 5 that states, "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background or views," the Hayward Public Library maintains that the Internet is for all library customers.

The Internet enables access to information, images and commentary beyond the confines of the Library's collection, mission, selection criteria, and collection development policies. Given the constantly evolving nature of the Internet and the absence of any governing body, there may be occasions when information of a controversial nature is accessed. Library staff cannot control the availability of information links, which often change rapidly and unpredictably. Library customers are advised, as with all library materials, to exercise judgment and discrimination when evaluating the usefulness and reliability of material found on the Internet.

The Hayward Public Library does not monitor information accessed over the Internet and cannot guarantee the validity or accuracy of information found on the Internet. Library customers need to be good information consumers, questioning the validity of the information. Library customers are warned that the Internet is not a secure medium and that privacy of e-mail and other communications is not guaranteed. All transactions, files, and communication are vulnerable to unauthorized access and use, and therefore, should be considered public.

While many businesses offer the opportunity to buy merchandise by credit card on the Internet, the Hayward Public Library does not allow

any commercial use of the Internet. The Library assumes no responsibility for damages to a user's computer, disks or files arising from the use of the Internet through a library connection.

The Hayward Public Library supports parents and guardians in their efforts to guide their children's intellectual and social development. Parents are encouraged to review the guidelines for Internet use in the pamphlets Child Safety on the Information Highway, and Teen Safety on the Information Highway, available at the Information Desks, and to discuss appropriate use with their children. As is the case with other resources in the Library, it is the sole right and responsibility of the parent or guardian to provide any monitoring or restriction of their own child's access to the Internet. The Library does not provide this monitoring or supervision. In order to guide children's use of this information resource, the Library selects and provides on Internet computers in the children's room recommended search engines appropriate for children.

Using the Internet is a new experience for many Library staff. Some have more experience than others do. In all cases, we will try to assist you in accessing the Internet. Library staff cannot provide in-depth training concerning the Internet. We may, however, be able to offer searching suggestions and answer questions. Because of library scheduling, Internet-trained staff may not always be able to spend time helping you. Enjoy your exploration of the Internet, but remember that many times you will find the information you need in our books, periodicals, and electronic databases. If you have any questions, please ask for assistance at the Information Desk.

RULES:

All Library customers accessing the Internet in the Library are expected to use this resource in a responsible and ethical manner, consistent with the educational, informational and recreational purposes for which it is provided. Library customers are also expected to abide by the Rules of Conduct that govern public behavior in the Library and the Rules and Procedures established for public use of the Internet. Library customers are asked to respect the privacy of Internet users and to refrain from intentionally observing customer's use of the Internet.

Library customers using the Internet may not:

- Use the Library's Internet terminals for unauthorized, illegal or unethical purposes.
- Modify or gain access to files, passwords or data belonging to the Library or others.
- Make any attempt to alter, damage and/or destroy computer hardware or software.
- Make unauthorized entry into other networks and systems.
- Violate the privacy of others, harass other users, or send harassing or threatening messages.
- Use the Internet terminals in the Library to view or disseminate illegal images.
- Make unauthorized copies of copyrighted or licensed software or data.

Rules approved by the Hayward Library Commission: June 26, 2000